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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/758,372	01/15/2004	Herbert E. Schwartz	26502-73682	5422
23643	7590	01/27/2009	EXAMINER	
BARNES & THORNBURG LLP			WOO, JULIAN W	
11 SOUTH MERIDIAN			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46204			3773	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			01/27/2009	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

indocket@btlaw.com

Office Action Summary

Application No. 10/758,372	Applicant(s) SCHWARTZ ET AL.	
Examiner Julian W. Woo	Art Unit 3773	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 November 2008.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**.
- 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-4 and 6-17 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-4 and 6-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on November 11, 2008 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 1-4 and 6-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Bonutti et al. (6,010,525). Bonutti et al. disclose, at least in figures 26-28 and col. 26, line 63 to col. 28, line 23; a device including a first anchor (540) having a locking mechanism (542) configured to grip and hold or lock a suture at any point along the suture; and a cannula (544) including a first lumen (578), the first anchor being shaped to seat below the first surface of soft tissue (54) or is capable of seating below the first surface of a meniscus, whereby proper seating of the device closes a defect without

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interfering with joint articulation; a second anchor (602) having a hole, and a suture (52), where the suture connects and first and second anchors by passing through the lumen of the cannula of the first anchor while traveling in a first direction, by passing through the hole of the second anchor, and by returning through the lumen of the cannula of the first anchor while traveling in a second and opposite direction, where tension on the suture pulls the second anchor toward the first anchor. Note: The introductory statement of intended use (“for repairing a defect in soft tissue” or a meniscus) has been carefully considered but deemed not to impose any structural limitations on the claims patentably distinguishable over the device of Bonutti et al., which is capable of being used as claimed if one desires to do so.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

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5. Claims 10-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bonutti et al. (5,383,905) in view of Wilk (5,391,173). Bonutti et al. disclose the invention substantially as claimed, where the suture also forms a loop with respect to the first anchor, where the lumen of the first anchor includes a first opening (at 594) defined in a first side of the first anchor and a second opening (582 or 584) defined in a second side of the first anchor, the first opening being larger than the second opening, and where the lumen of the first anchor is tapered (at 594). However, Bonutti et al. do not disclose that the first anchor has a frustoconical end shaped to bury into and seat below the first surface of the soft tissue. Wilk teaches, at least in figures 1, 2C, and 2D and in col. 3, line 66 to col. 4, line 2 and col. 4, lines 39-50; a suture anchor (8) including an external frustoconical shape. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, in view of Wilk, to modify the first anchor of Bonutti et al. so that it has a frustoconical shape or end-shape. Such a shape would provide a tapering surface for engagement of the anchor with a tool or by hand and allow sliding or pushing of the anchor along a suture and towards (or into) soft tissue.

Response to Amendment

6. Applicant's arguments filed on November 11, 2008 and with respect to claims 1-4 and 6-17 have been fully considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

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Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Gray (4,455,717) teaches a suture anchor with a frustoconical end-shape.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Julian W. Woo whose telephone number is (571) 272-4707. The examiner can normally be reached Mon.-Fri., 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM Eastern Time, alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jackie Ho can be reached on (571) 272-4696. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Julian W. Woo/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3773